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SUBJECT: MEDIA STRATEGY FOR MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION
VISIT, JUNE 17, 2004

1. As part of a PAS media strategy for the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) team visiting Honduras, PAS arranged a press conference for President Ricardo Maduro and John Hewko, Vice-President for Country Relations at the MCC, to address the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) importance for poverty reduction in Honduras on June 14.

2. The second component of PAS' strategy involved a one-on-one 45-minute interview with John Hewko and Renato Alvarez, anchor of the morning television talk show "Frente a Frente", the highest-rated and most influential talk show on the Honduran media. The interview gave Hewko a chance to elaborate on key MCA principles and explain to a large audience the five essential points that will enable Honduras to access MCA funds.

3. The final component of PAS' strategy entailed a press conference, where Hewko explained the basic requirements and conditions to enable Honduras to access MCA funds.

4. Hewko said, "The fact that Honduras has been selected as one of the first 16 countries eligible for MCA funds proves the confidence the U.S. has in Honduras, and we acknowledge the efforts the country has made to improve its social and economic condition. To be able to access MCA funds, Honduras has to take on the responsibility and commitment to put forth its own proposals for development. In addition, these proposals must reflect the needs and opinions of all sectors of society, and they need to include rigorous mechanisms of transparency and accountability to ensure the funds are being utilized properly. Finally, we must point out that there are no guarantees that Honduras will receive MCA funds. The MCC cannot promise it will sign an agreement with all 16 countries. It will analyze the proposals from each country based on their own merits."

5. Media coverage was extensive. Most radio and television stations, and all national newspapers, had positive coverage. The majority of them highlighted the fact that there are no guarantees that Honduras will have access to MCA funds and the responsibility of the Honduran government to present feasible proposals to benefit from the MCA.

Palmer